



# FIELD MANUAL

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# **AIRBORNE RANGER™**

Modern Combat Behind Enemy Lines



**Field Manual**  
**Change 0, September 1987**

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## Introduction: "Rangers, Lead the Way!"

**THE ELITE UNIT** has always captured the imagination of both soldier and civilian. Units such as the Rangers are the point men of the armed forces, the cutting edge, and they fascinate us to an extent out of proportion to their numbers. We envy them their sharp, distinctive appearance, their high status, their *esprit de corps*, and most of all their awesome skill in their chosen profession. They have an aura of competence that is at once reassuring and intimidating, as if they will admit no limits to what they can achieve. This unshakeable confidence would seem preposterous if it had not been borne out time and again by events on and off the battlefield. The really are as good as they think they are.

Throughout history, when the need was there for a special unit to perform extremely difficult and hazardous missions, the United States has called on its soldiers to form a unit of Rangers. And every time the volunteers have stepped forward — from throughout the Army, the toughest, the smartest and the most dedicated come forth to join the Rangers. They know that a soldier qualified to wear the small embroidered tab that says "RANGER" is a soldier who has proven himself in one of the most rugged and rigorous training courses in the world. They've suffered the worst that man and nature can throw at them and come out hardened, tempered. They are the best of the best.

And they better be, for they are often called upon to do the seemingly impossible. Need an impregnable shore fortification taken out in advance of a landing? Need supply lines cut behind enemy lines? A lightning strike to liberate a prison camp? A low altitude combat drop on an enemy airfield? Call the Rangers. They will do the job, if it can be done.

Airborne Ranger gives you a taste of what it's like to be an elite soldier on a hazardous mission. Behind enemy lines, cut off from friends and allies, you have nothing to depend on but stealth, quick wits, combat skill and guts. You're surrounded, outnumbered and outgunned, your enemies are dangerous and dedicated, but others are counting on you to complete your mission. You have surprise on your side, and a creed that won't admit of failure. Ranger, lead the way!



## HOW TO PLAY WITHOUT READING THE MANUAL

This "quick start" is for players who prefer to learn by experimentation. To fully understand the game, you'll want to read the appropriate sections of this manual, but to get started in a hurry, just follow these instructions.

- **Loading:** See Loading section of the Technical Supplement.
- **Ranger Assignment Screen:** Press your controller button to select Assign a Practice Ranger.
- **Mission Selection Screen:** Press the button to select **MISSION 1: DESTROY A MUNITIONS DEPOT**. Next is the Difficulty Level bar, which is already set on the easiest level. Press the controller button again to **CONTINUE**.
- **Campaign Ribbon Recognition:** The next screen to appear will ask you to identify a campaign ribbon. You will notice that there are ribbons with identifying names at the bottom of many pages in this manual. Find the name in the manual that matches the name on the screen, then use the *controller* to move the pointer to the matching ribbon. Press the controller button to select.
- **Mission Orders:** Read your orders, be sure you understand them, then press the button to **CONTINUE**.
- **Airdrop:** The map screen will appear, scrolling toward the top of the screen, with your aircraft in the center. Use your *controller* to steer the aircraft left or right; press the button to drop your supply pods. When the Jump Light turns green, press the button again to make the Ranger jump. Use the controller to steer him to a safe (clear) landing zone.
- **Combat Screen:** Use the controller to move the Ranger; press the button to use his current weapon. Look at the keyboard overlay to see which keys enable you to change weapons or movement modes. Press the MAP key to check your location (and pause the game). When you've accomplished the mission, press the **PICKUP** key to recall your aircraft. Good luck, and keep your head down!

## PART I: BEHIND ENEMY LINES

### Ranger Assignment

After loading the game, the title screen appears. You can let it run through its entire animation and sound sequence, or you can leave the title screen by pressing the *controller* button. After the title screen, you report to the personnel officer for Ranger assignment. This sequence of options lets you select a Ranger for the upcoming mission. The initial choices are:

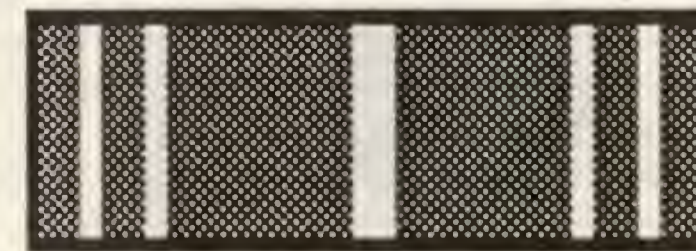
- **ASSIGN A PRACTICE RANGER**
- **ASSIGN A VETERAN RANGER**
- **FORMAT A NEW ROSTER DISKETTE**

The first choice is always highlighted. To highlight a different choice, use your controller to move the cursor up and down until the choice you want is highlighted. Select it by pressing your controller button.

- **Assign a Practice Ranger:** *Warning:* a practice Ranger will not be recorded on the Veteran Roster after the game. This choice selects an average Ranger from the ranks and assigns him to the mission. Use this option for practice games or when you want to get into the mission without delay.
- **Assign a Veteran Ranger:** This choice lets you assign a veteran Ranger from the Veteran Ranger Roster to the mission. Insert your Ranger Diskette so you can review the veterans and select the one most qualified for the job. When you select a Ranger, you will be asked to **ASSIGN** or **RETIRE** him. Select **ASSIGN** to use that Ranger on the mission. Select **RETIRE** to replace that veteran with a new Ranger.

**Warning:** A retired Ranger is gone from the roster for good!

You can use this option to assign a "new" Ranger. You will be asked to give him a name; just follow the instructions on the screen and he'll soon be all set up on the Roster Diskette.



ARMY ACHIEVEMENT MEDAL



- **Format a New Roster Diskette:** If you have created no Roster Diskette for the storage of Rangers on a Veteran Roster, or your previous Roster Diskette is full and you wish to create another, select this choice and follow the instructions that appear on the screen. Be sure to have a blank disk handy so it can be inserted for formatting when the personnel officer asks for it.

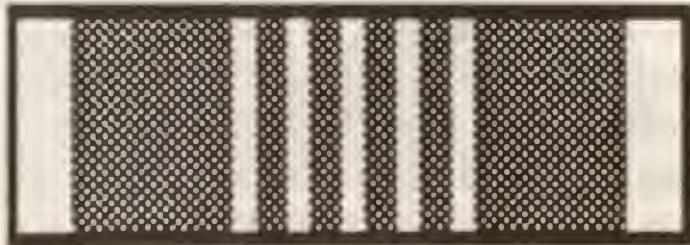
**Mission Selection**

There are always more missions that need to be done than there are Rangers to do them. Choose the mission you wish by highlighting and selecting it with your controller.

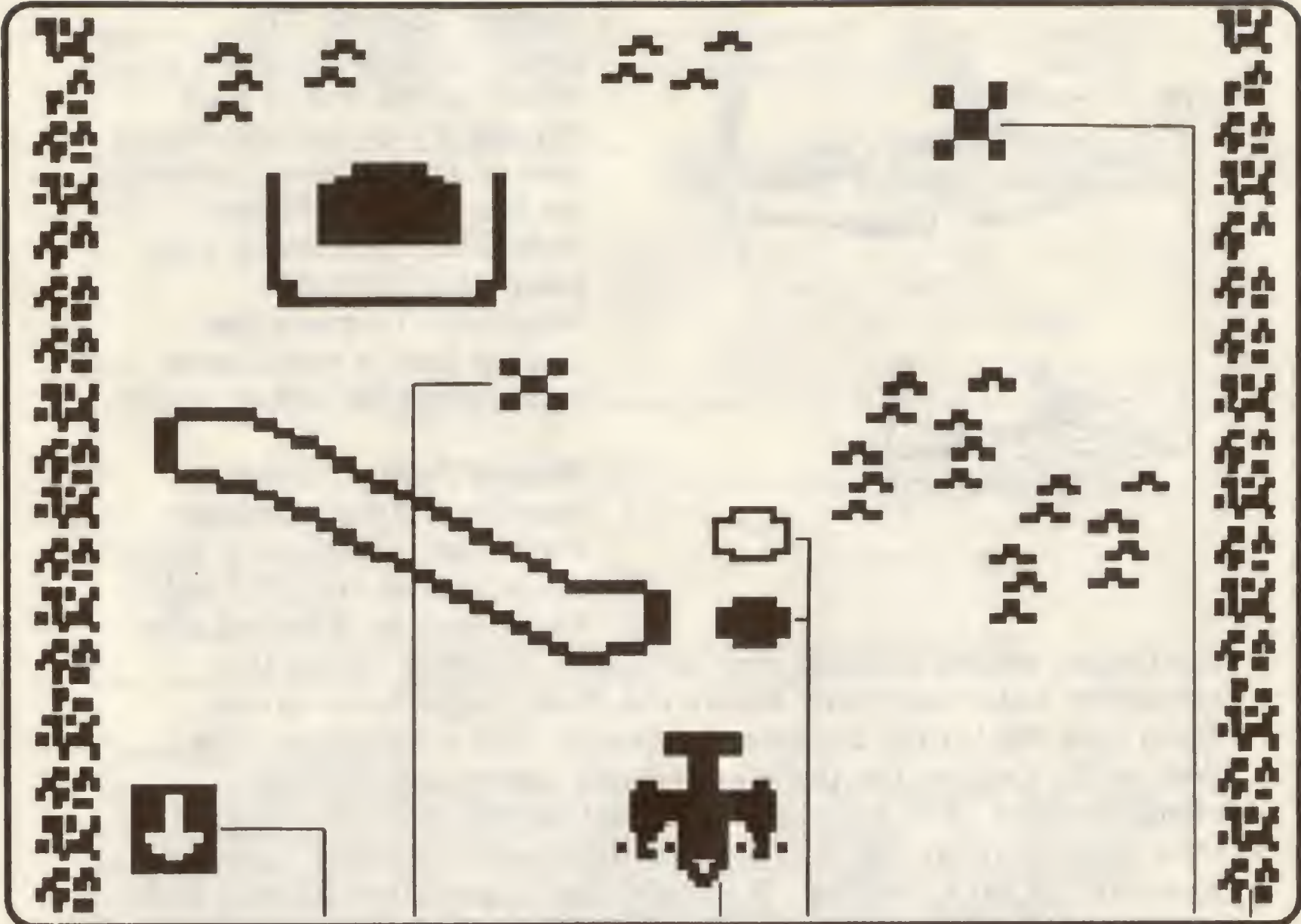
- **Campaigns:** Experienced commanders may want to select "Campaign." A Ranger assigned to a campaign will be expected to perform all of these missions, in an order determined by his superiors. A Ranger on campaign will not be able to select a specific mission until the campaign is through. By selecting "Campaign" you show a commitment to a career in the Rangers, and will be eligible for promotions and awards that are not available to those who prefer to select their missions.
- **Difficulty Level:** After selection you will be asked to choose the difficulty level of the mission (or campaign). The higher the difficulty level, the more dangerous the mission, but the Ranger will have the opportunity to score more merit points. Use the controller to move the slider left or right on the difficulty bar (left = easy; right = difficult). Press controller button to select.

**Fatigue Test — Campaign Ribbon Recognition**

To test your alertness, the next screen asks you to identify a campaign ribbon from one of six showing. (A Ranger too fatigued to tell one campaign ribbon from another will not be assigned a mission.) There are ribbons with identifying names at the bottom of pages in this manual. They are shown in alphabetical order. Find the name in the manual that matches the name on the screen, then use the controller to move the pointer to the matching ribbon. Press the controller button to select. Alternatively, enter the number corresponding to the correct ribbon.



ARMY COMMENDATION MEDAL



JUMP LIGHT      SUPPLY POD      OSPREY      PARAFOIL      PICKUP POINT      UNSAFE TERRAIN

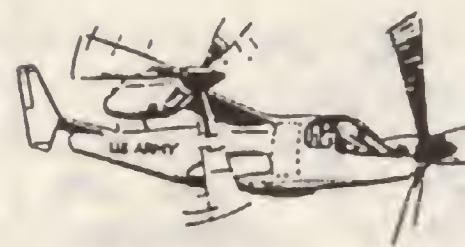
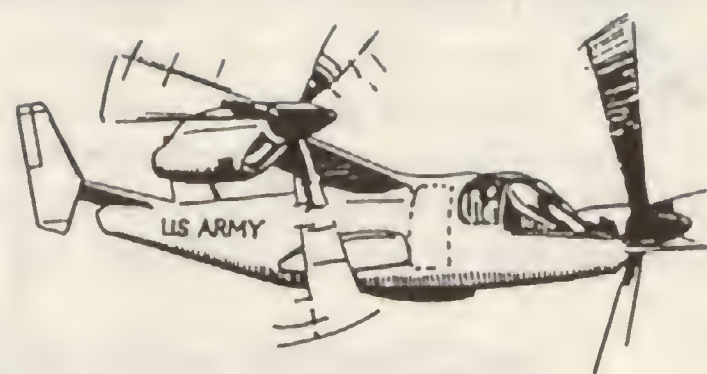
**Airdrop to the Mission Zone**

The mission begins. While enemy attention is diverted elsewhere, a V-22 Osprey aircraft flies your Ranger to the mission zone, hugging the ground and dodging enemy radar. The Osprey will pass over the goal area for a quick reconnaissance, then continue south to the Drop Zone where you can jump in relative safety. Take note of the terrain you're passing over — you'll have to find the best way across this territory to get to your goal.



ARMY OF OCCUPATION MEDAL





- **Osprey Control:** The Osprey flies south at a steady speed, but at your request it can deviate course east or west to some extent (so you can drop Supply Pods where you want, and jump at a favorable location). To move the Osprey east or west, move your controller left or right.

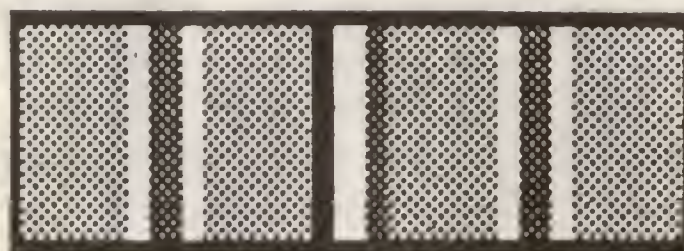
- **Supply Pods:** You have been issued three Supply Pods, each containing extra arms, ammo and first aid. These may be dropped after

the Osprey enters mission zone airspace. To drop, press the controller button anytime before the Jump Light turns green. Each time the button is pressed a Supply Pod is kicked out the door of the Osprey; the pod's parachute opens and it drops straight down. It is recommended that Supply Pods be dropped over open territory, as they may be damaged and lost if they land in a ditch or on a boulder. A Ranger can't carry three Supply Pods worth of arms and ammo, so it's probably a good idea to drop them at intervals so they can be picked up later as needed.

- **Jump Into Danger:** When the Jump Light turns green, you can jump into the mission zone. To jump, press the controller button. A light-colored rectangle representing your parafoil (a controllable parachute) appears on the map view. A dark shadow appears beneath it, indicating your altitude. Use the controller to steer the parafoil. Try to land in an open area, away from enemy defenses such as bunkers and machine gun nests. If you land in a trench or on some obstacle like barbed wire, you could be wounded. If you land in a minefield, or in the badlands south of the drop zone, the mission could end before it starts.

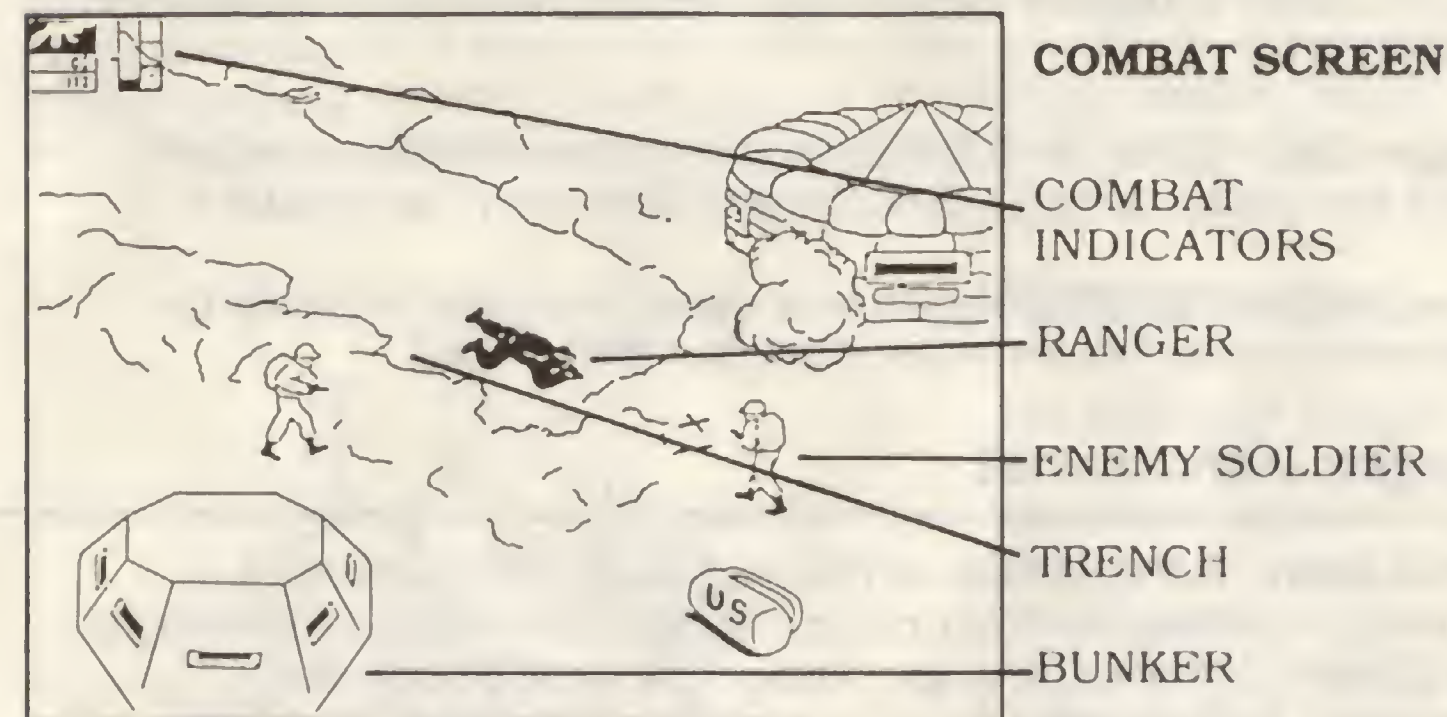
## Combat Screen

Most of the action takes place on the Combat Screen, which shows you, the Ranger, in the center,



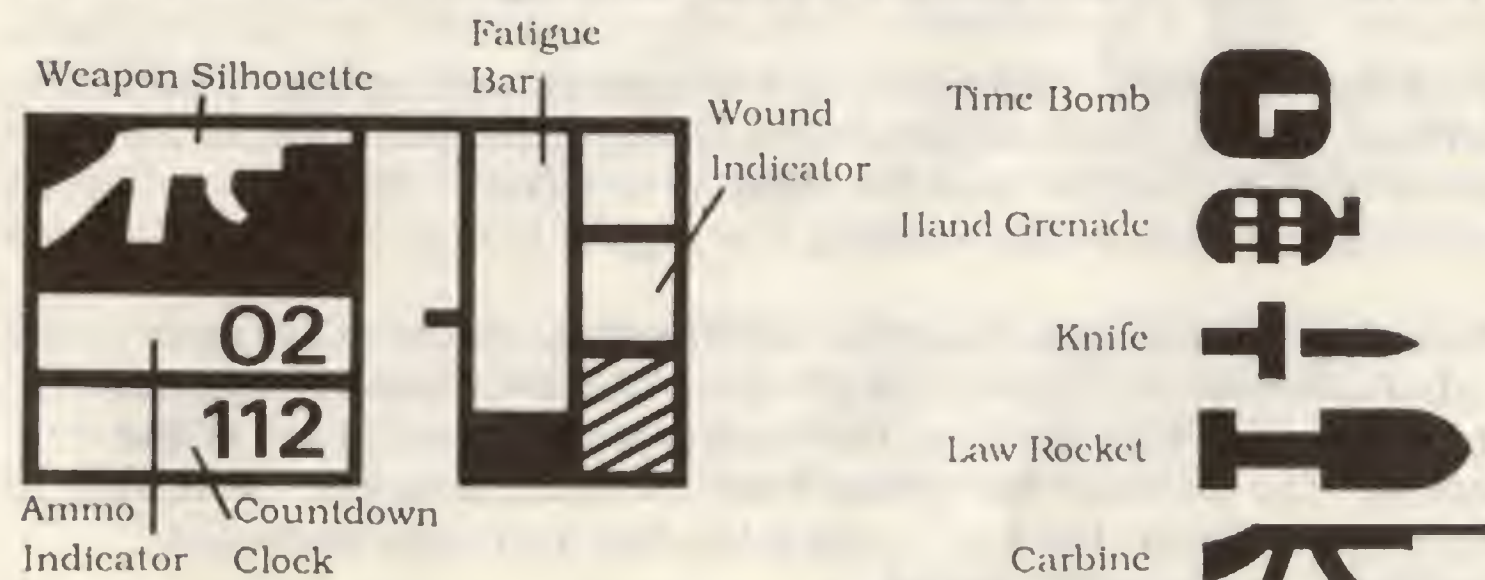
ASIATIC-PACIFIC CAMPAIGN

surrounded by your immediate environment. In the upper left hand corner of the screen are the Combat Indicators.



## Combat Indicators

The Combat Indicators give a quick-reference summary of your current condition. (For a more detailed summary, see the indicators on the Map View, as explained below.) The Combat Indicators include the weapon silhouette, ammo indicator, countdown clock, fatigue bar and wound indicator.



**Weapon Silhouette:** This shows the weapon currently used. (See Weapon Use for details.)

**Ammo Indicator:** This shows how much ammunition the Ranger has



BRONZE STAR



for the current weapon. (See Weapon Use for details.)

**Countdown Clock:** This shows, in seconds, how much time the Ranger has to complete the mission. (See Completing the Mission for details.)

**Fatigue Bar:** This shows the Ranger's relative tiredness, which affects his ability to run. (See Ranger Movement for details.)

**Wound Indicator:** This shows how many untreated wounds the Ranger has. (See Wounds and First Aid for details.)

## Ranger Movement

- **Direction:** The direction of Ranger facing and movement is determined using the controller. Simply move the controller in the direction you want to go. You rotate until facing that direction, then move.
- **Changing Movement Speeds:** You start the ground mission walking. To change to running, press the **RUN/WALK** key; to switch back to walking, press it again (it's a toggle). In like manner, pressing the **CRAWL/UPRIGHT** key enables you to toggle between walking (or running) and crawling. Press **CRAWL/UPRIGHT** to go prone; press again to stand up.
- **Walking:** Walking moves you at a reasonable rate speed, but it's difficult to stay out of sight while walking (your head sticks up above bushes, hedges, and the edges of trenches). Its main advantage is that while walking you regain energy lost.
- **Running:** Running moves you the fastest speed, but tires you rather quickly. It's best used for short dashes across dangerous open terrain. Note the two "bar" indicators at the top left of the screen. The leftmost bar grows from the bottom as you become more tired. When the bar reaches the top, you drop back into "walking" mode until rested sufficiently (bar decreased) to try running again. How fast you tire depends on your health (number of wounds) and how much gear you're carrying. A wounded Ranger carrying two Supply Pods can't run far at all.



**DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS**

- **Crawling:** Crawling is slowest, but in dangerous areas it's definitely the safest mode of travel. When crawling, you can hide behind boulders, bushes, hedges, walls and other low objects. Furthermore, when crawling in a depression such as a trench or ditch, enemies can't see you unless they are also in the depression. When crawling through water you are completely hidden, but if you stay down too long, you start drowning (taking wounds).



## Weapon Use

An Airborne Ranger has a variety of weapons at his disposal. To see which weapon you are currently armed with, look at the Combat Indicator at the top left corner of the screen and note what silhouette appears there. The Ranger always starts the mission armed

with the Carbine. Beneath the weapon silhouette is a digital ammo indicator showing how many rounds are available for that weapon. To change weapons, just press the appropriate key for the weapon you want. The silhouette will change when the weapons are switched.

When you first land, you are armed with an automatic carbine (with four magazines) three hand grenades, a LAW rocket and a time bomb. Further weapons and ammo must be collected from Supply Pods or (on some missions) enemy sources.

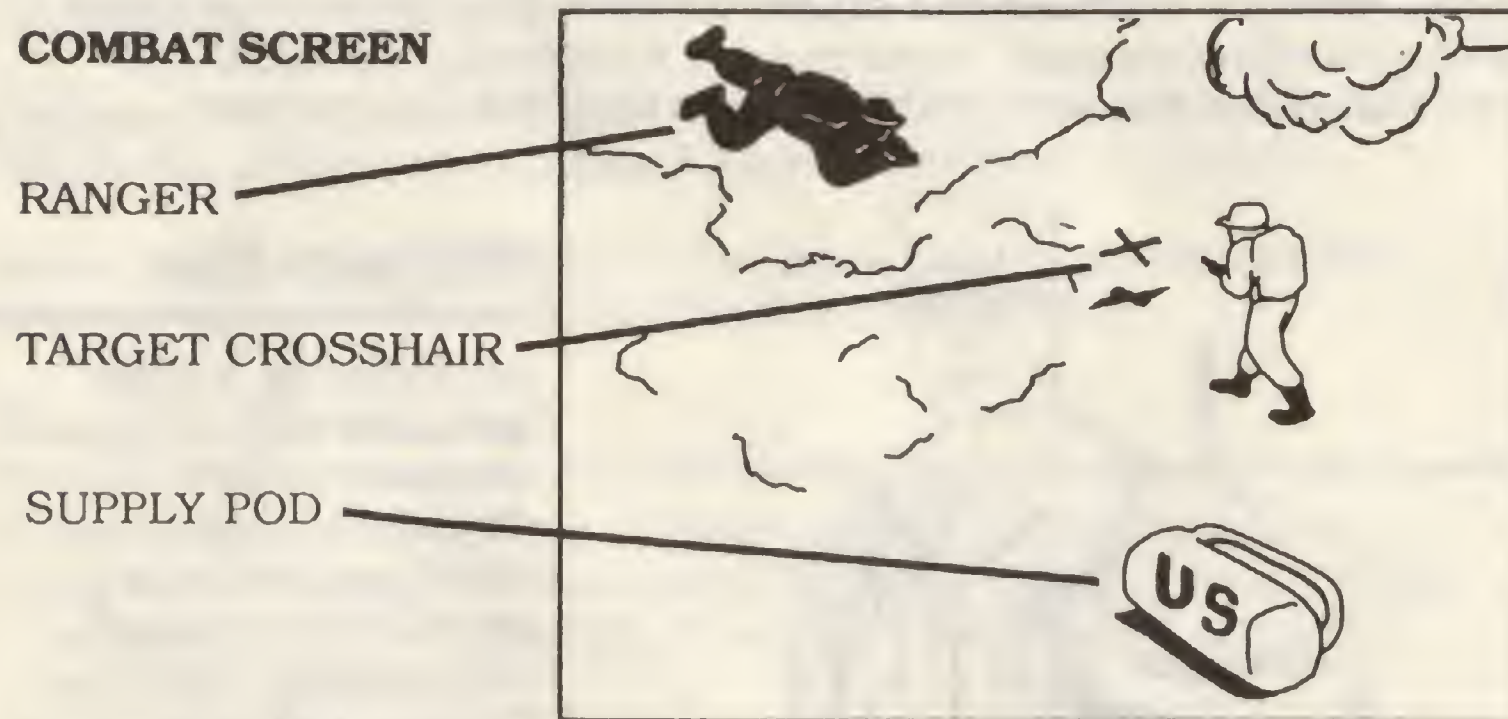


**DISTINGUISHED SERVICE MEDAL**



- **Aiming:** No matter which way you face, a Target Crosshair appears in front of you. This Target Crosshair indicates which way the Ranger's fire would go if he were to shoot. To aim, line up the Target Cross with a potential target and fire.

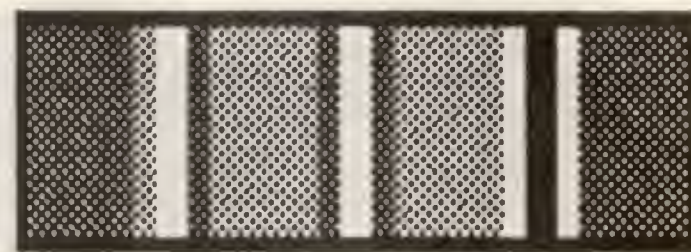
#### COMBAT SCREEN



You can face in only eight directions for movement purposes, but you can shoot in many more — 32 directions, in fact. To control this fine aiming ability, you'll have to master rotating just slightly so as to make the Target Crosshair move only one or two positions. Practice tapping the controller left or right, rotating the Target Crosshair just a few positions, until you get a feel for how to aim using your particular controller.

- **Carbine:** This short automatic rifle fires when the controller button is pressed. The Carbine is effective only against unarmored enemy troops. The ammo indicator shows how many magazines you have for the Carbine. Each magazine contains thirty rounds; a thrifty Ranger can make his Carbine ammo go a long way. You always automatically return to Carbine after using a Hand Grenade, LAW Rocket or Time Bomb.

- **Hand Grenade:** To throw a Hand Grenade, press the controller button, then release it. The grenade is thrown when the button is released. The longer the button is held before release, the farther the grenade is thrown. Hand Grenades are effective



EUROPEAN-AFRICAN CAMPAIGN

against enemy troops, machine gun nests, wooden doors and other lightly-armored objects. The ammo indicator shows how many individual Hand Grenades you have. After throwing a Hand Grenade you automatically return to Carbine.

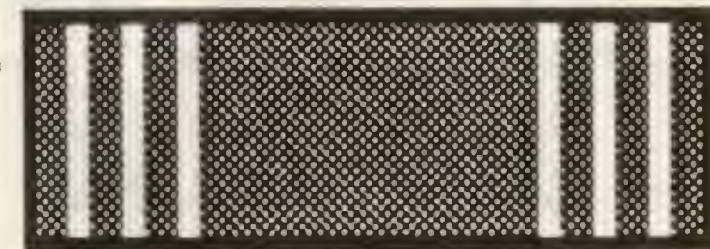
- **LAW Rocket:** A Light Antitank Weapon rocket is launched when the controller button is pressed. LAW Rockets are effective against nearly all enemy troops and defenses. The ammo indicator shows how many individual rockets you have. After using a LAW Rocket you automatically return to Carbine.
- **Knife:** When the controller button is pressed, you stab in the direction you are facing. The Knife is effective only against enemy troops who are right next to the Ranger. Its advantage is its silent attack (which attracts no attention) and the fact that it never runs out of ammunition.
- **Time Bombs:** These are charges of plastic explosive with variable time-detonators. There are three different Time Bomb keys for weapon selection, each with a different length of time to detonation: 5, 10 or 15 seconds. When you select a Time Bomb you also select the length of time its detonator is set for. After setting a Time Bomb you automatically return to Carbine.

To select Time Bomb, press one of the Time Bomb keys. Press the controller button to place the bomb. When you release the button, the countdown to detonation begins. It's a very good idea to get away from a ticking Time Bomb. If you can't get away, get behind cover.

Time Bombs are effective against all enemy troops and defenses. They are also excellent for causing diversions, as you can set a time bomb with a long fuse, move well away, and watch all the enemy troops scurry toward the crater after it goes off. The ammo indicator shows how many individual Time Bombs the Ranger has.

#### Wounds and First Aid

- **Wounds:** In the Combat Indicators, the rightmost bar shows how many wounds you have suffered. Each time you are wounded one part of the three-



GOOD CONDUCT MEDAL



segment bar lights up. Thanks to your superb new lightweight body armor, most small-caliber bullets fail to penetrate and only succeed in knocking you down. But you can't stand up in front of a hail of fire and expect to escape unscathed – occasionally you'll get hit in an unprotected spot, or suffer a light wound even through the armor. With one or two wounds, you keep moving; with three wounds, you die (and the mission ends).

Some weapons, such as land mines, flame throwers or antitank rockets, can inflict multiple wounds on a Ranger – maybe even kill him instantly.

- **First Aid:** To treat a wound, press the **FIRST AID** key on the keyboard. You are issued one First Aid kit with which you can treat a wound and keep going long enough to complete the mission. Each Supply Pod contains another First Aid kit. Use of a First Aid kit removes one wound from your total and exhausts that First Aid kit.

## Map View














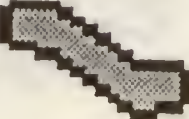
- **Using the Map:** You have been provided with a detailed map of the mission zone. To look at this map, press the **MAP** key. (This also pauses the game). To return to the mission, press the **MAP** key again, or press the controller button.

The Ranger's position appears near the center of the map. The map shows the approximate area within range of the Ranger's vision. To see more, use the controller to scroll the map up and down.






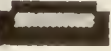










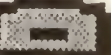


JOINT MERITORIOUS UNIT AWARD


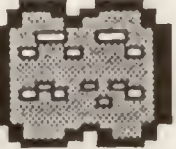










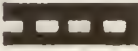


## Desert Map Symbols

MG Nest 	Bush 	Bunker 
Barbed Wire 	SAM Launcher 	Wall 
Tent 	Guard House 	Explosives Magazine 
Boulder 	Hostage Prison 	Ammo Shack 
Mine Field 		Trench 

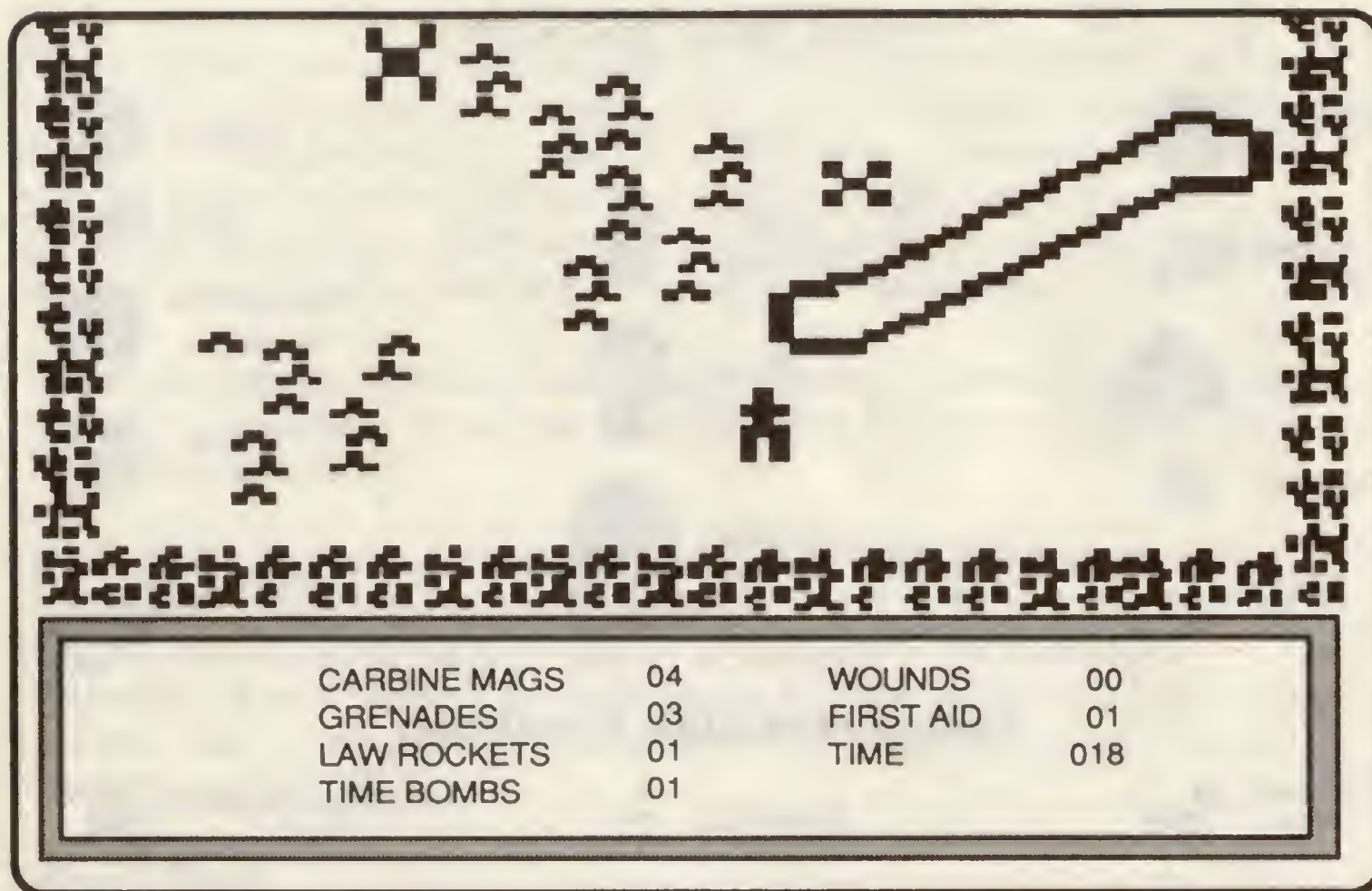
## Temperate Map Symbols:

Barbed Wire 	Minefield 	Communications Post 
Tree Stump 	Tank Traps 	Manned Turret 
Ditch 	MG Nest 	Tent 
Pond 	Wall 	Turret Bunker 
Proximity Mines 	Tiger Pit 	Fuel Dump 
	Controls Pyramid 	Bunker 

## Arctic Map Symbols:

Aircraft 	Icy Pond 	Wall 
Bunker 	Ravine 	Fir Tree 
Radar 	Hangar 	Snow Drift 
MG Nest 	Aviation Fuel Dump 	Barbed Wire 
Airstrip 		Guard House 
Minefield 		





- **Map View Indicators:** These indicators are provided so you can see at a glance the condition of the Ranger's supplies. Shown is the total amount of ammunition the Ranger is carrying. First Aid kits, Wounds sustained and a backup Countdown Clock are also shown.

## Completing the Mission

- **Mission Goals:** Each mission has different goals, explained in the **MISSION BRIEFINGS** section. On some missions it pays to be stealthy, sneaking past enemy positions and hiding until patrols pass by. On others it's best to do as much damage as possible, regardless of how much attention you attract. Every mission has a specified Pickup Point, shown on the Map. All missions end when you are picked up by the Osprey, killed or captured.
- **Countdown:** These rapid insertion and retrieval missions are timed very tightly. You have only a certain specified amount of time in which to complete a mission. The time starts counting down the moment the



KOREAN SERVICE MEDAL

Ranger lands, as shown on the Countdown Clock in the indicators. If not summoned earlier, the Osprey will show up at the Pickup Point when the countdown reaches zero. Don't get left behind!

- **Recall:** To call the Osprey to pick you up, press the **RECALL** key. After a short delay, the Osprey will return to the mission zone and hover over the Pickup Point, unrolling a rope ladder so you can climb on. The Pickup Point is either at the mission goal or near the mission goal; either way, it is marked on the map by an "X." The Osprey comes **ONLY** to this Pickup Point to retrieve you.

The Osprey can only stay above the Pickup Point for a limited time. If you don't make it to the Pickup Point before the Osprey leaves, you face death or capture.

- **Capture:** If you miss your pickup and then run out of ammunition, you may be captured. The mission is over, but you may not be lost forever. If not killed, you will be taken to an enemy P.O.W. camp. See the Liberate a P.O.W. Camp mission for an explanation of how a captured Ranger can be freed and returned to active duty.

## Mission Briefings

Twelve general types of missions are available for assignment. Four of these are set in desert terrain, four in a temperate zone (like Central Europe) and four in an arctic environment. In the desert, the heat rapidly tires you out, so the distance you can run before becoming fatigued is decreased. In the arctic wastes, sound is absorbed by the snow and the constant winds; it's hard to hear footsteps and gunfire.

- **Destroy a Munitions Depot:** Analysis of high-altitude photography of the enemy-held desert zone has identified the location of a key munitions depot which is supplying fuel and ordnance to the enemy. Your mission is to penetrate the defenses around this munitions depot and destroy as much of it as possible, thus disrupting the enemy's line of supply.



LEGION OF MERIT





The enemy depot consists of an ammunition shack, a bunker-like explosives magazine, and a fuel dump. All three should be destroyed, if possible. Intelligence suggests that the enemy is storing ammunition compatible with your weapons, so it may be possible to raid the ammo stores before destroying them.

You are advised to use your own initiative when deciding on a high- or low-profile approach. However,

extra merit points will be awarded for the number of enemies eliminated, so Command's advice is to let 'em have it.

**Tactical Tip:** Keep an eye on the countdown clock! It pays to be stealthy, but if you spend too much time sneaking around you'll miss your pickup. Try to move quickly through unfortified areas.



• **Steal a Code Book:** Your mission is to infiltrate an enemy headquarters area in the temperate zone, find the communications post, and steal a pouch containing secret radio codes. The enemy HQ is somewhere within the walls of a ruined village. To find the communications post, look for the distinctive radio aerial. Move next to the radio to pick up the pouch.

Be advised that the area is currently occupied by an elite unit of enemy troops who are expecting trouble. Extra merit

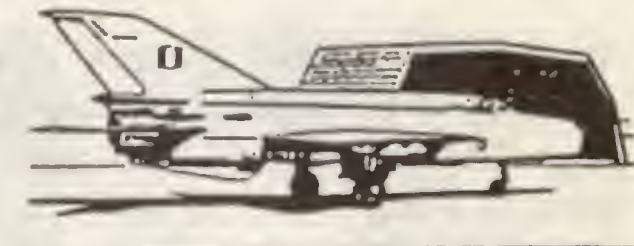


NCO PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

points will be awarded for number of enemies eliminated, but the primary target is that code book.

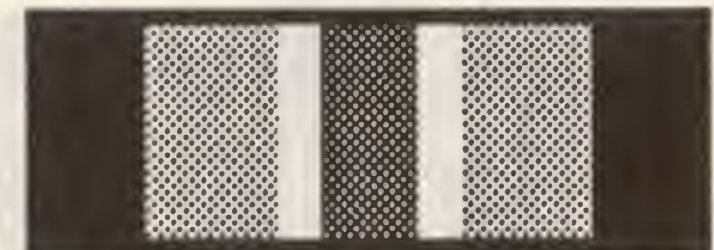
**Tactical Tip:** Don't drop all your supply pods in one place. If you drop them all near the goal zone, you'll have a long way to go before reloading; if you drop them all near your Drop Zone, you'll find that all that ammo is too much to carry. Spread them out, dropping them along your probable route through the combat zone. It's useful to drop them between ditches, where you can make a short dash from concealment, pick up the ammo and get back to cover. Don't drop them near enemy fortifications!

• **Disable Enemy Aircraft:** Your Ranger unit is going to attempt to force a mountain pass at 0900; to have a chance of success they're going to need air superiority. Your mission is to disable the aircraft that would most likely be called to support the enemy defense. You'll be dropped near the crude arctic runway where the planes are stationed. You must penetrate the runway defenses and damage or destroy every enemy plane you find there.



**Caution:** If the enemy sees you coming and becomes alarmed, they may scramble the fighter(s) for safety, and the runway will be empty when you arrive. Try to avoid eliminating enemy troops and installations before your arrival at the runway area. (If absolutely necessary, use your knife.) If they think they're under attack by a dangerous enemy, those jets will be gone. Additional merit points will be awarded on the basis of number of enemies eliminated, but if you don't destroy the aircraft your mission is a failure.

**Tactical Tips:** Stick to the ravines as much as possible, crawling to maintain minimum visibility. Use the map to plot a course, using the ravines as "safe" routes past enemy positions. Be patient — wait for patrolling soldiers to pass before moving.



OVERSEA SERVICE



- **Capture an Enemy Officer:** Army Intelligence has reason to believe that a certain enemy elite unit has been tapped for a special assignment. It is urgent that Intelligence find out what that assignment is. Your mission is to infiltrate the desert headquarters of the enemy unit and capture an officer for interrogation.



You are advised to search through the tents of the enemy HQ area for a target. To identify an enemy officer, look for a soldier with a different-colored uniform from other enemy troops. If you can get next to an enemy officer and threaten him with a weapon, he will probably surrender quietly.

After accomplishing your goal, recall the Osprey for pick up. You may have to defend yourself and prisoner while waiting for the plane to arrive—make sure your prisoner isn't hurt! A wounded prisoner may not be able to stand interrogation, and thus is worth fewer merit points. Further merit points will be awarded for the number of enemies eliminated.

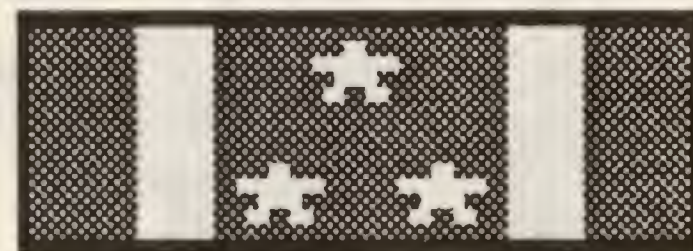
**Note:** The Pickup Point marker that appears on the map before the officer is captured is for emergency pick ups only. Once captured the Pickup Point moves to the capture location.

**Tactical Tip:** Once you've captured an officer, don't leave him alone — he may make a break for it.



- **Cut a Pipeline:** Army Intelligence has become aware of a possible weakness in the enemy's supply line. They have identified a location where a vital gas pipeline emerges from the ground in the temperate zone at a pumping station. Your mission is to penetrate the guards around this pumping station and damage or destroy it.

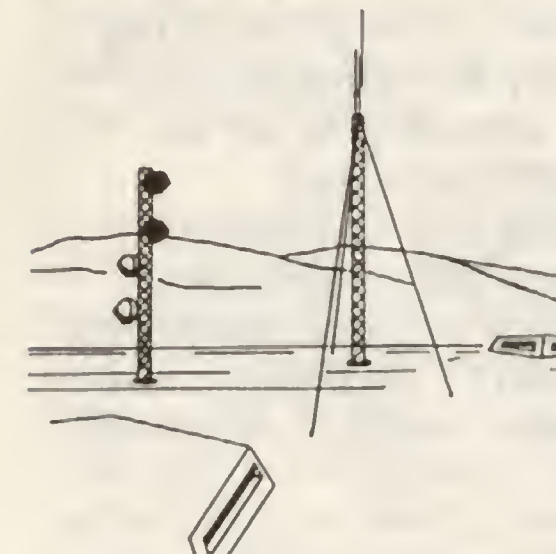
The pumping station is known to be heavily armored — only a time bomb can destroy it. Further



PHILIPPINE DEFENSE

reports indicate that it is defended by the enemy's new automated minitanks. Good luck.

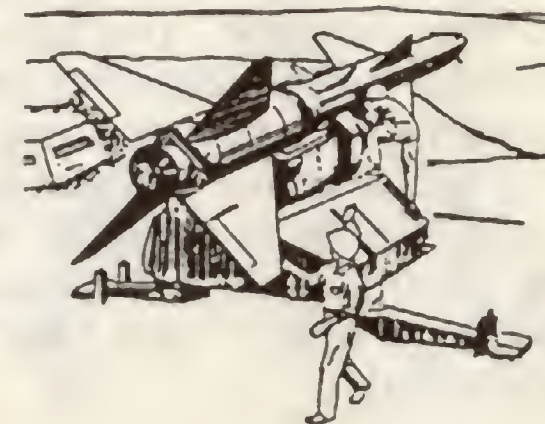
**Tactical Tip:** Save LAW Rockets for use on the minitanks. Learn the trick of firing from a ditch at a tank or bunker: aim, pop up, fire, and duck.



- **Knock Out Enemy Radar Array:** Stealth jet overflights have finally located the enemy early-warning radar array that has been giving the Air Force so much trouble. The radar antennas are guarded by elite troops, but one Ranger might be able to take them by surprise, slip in and knock them out before a proper defense can be organized.

The radar array is bounded on the south by a partially-frozen river. Intelligence suggests that the enemy would not expect anyone to be foolish enough to attack from that direction, so naturally that's where you'll be dropped. Once you cross the river, disable as many radar antennas as you are able.

**Tactical Tip:** Try dropping all supply pods in the top third of the combat zone. Then, lightly armed, run as far as possible before going to cover, dodging fortifications and leaving surprised patrols behind. This may get you to the goal zone with relatively little combat.



- **Disable a SAM Site:** Command has planned an air strike on a critical enemy installation deep in the desert, but the target is ringed by Surface-to-Air Missile sites. These must be taken out. The **SAMs** are portable and can be replaced, so they must be eliminated just before the air strike. You will be dropped near one of these sites just ahead of H-Hour with orders to sneak in and disable it, then get out — if possible.

The actual site consists of at least one, and possibly as many as four, **SAM** launchers. (The number depends upon the



PRESIDENTIAL UNIT CITATION



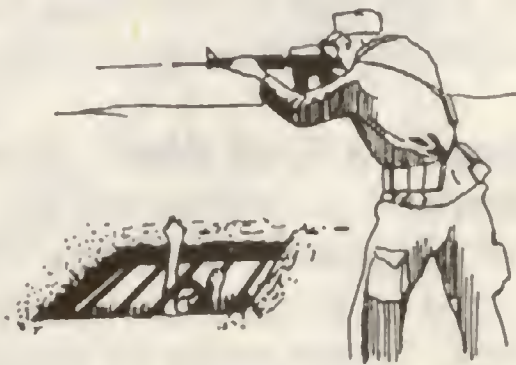
difficulty of the mission.) The primary mission is to destroy all the **SAM** launchers.

It is important that the enemy have little or no advance warning of the attack on its **SAM** sites. If you give away the assault too soon, reinforcements may be called and the missions of all the other Rangers in the area may be seriously compromised. Therefore your orders are to avoid eliminating any enemies (except with the knife) until you arrive in the mission goal zone (the area around the **SAM** launchers). They may see you, but if you refrain from shooting they won't go on full alert. Avoiding enemy contact will result in a large merit point bonus. Premature enemy contact may result in a merit point penalty.

Additional merit points will be awarded on the basis of number of enemies eliminated, but these will never be sufficient to offset the penalty of premature contact. Keep your head down and your finger off the trigger!

**Warning:** Intelligence reports indicate that the **SAM** launchers may be guarded by new automated mini-bunkers that shoot at any movement their motion detectors sense.

**Tactical Tip:** When approaching the automated mini-bunkers, listen for the distinctive whine of the motion detector. You may be able to tell when a motion detector is active or inactive even before it appears on the combat screen. The motion detectors can't tell friend from foe, so don't come between a mini-bunker and a moving enemy soldier or you may get shot by accident!



- **Liberate a P.O.W. Camp:** A pre-planned diversion has drawn most of the defenses away from a small enemy Prisoner of War camp; one Ranger might be able to get through and liberate the prisoners. This is your mission.

The prisoners are being held in "tiger pits," cells set into the ground with barred steel doors



PURPLE HEART

across the top. The controls to open these doors are located in a small concrete pyramid set between the tiger pits. To open the pits, you must blow up the pyramid (exposing the controls), then kick the control lever over. Once this is accomplished, recall the plane to pick you up and the prisoners. Defend the prisoners until the Osprey arrives.

It is important that the enemy have little or no advance warning of the attack on the P.O.W. camp. If you show yourself too soon, the prisoners may be removed from the camp and there will be no one to rescue. Therefore your orders are to avoid shooting until you arrive in the mission goal zone. Freeing the prisoners will result in a large merit point bonus. Premature enemy contact which causes the prisoners to be moved away may result in a merit point penalty. Additional merit points will be awarded based on number of enemies eliminated, but it's far more important to liberate the prisoners.

If any veteran Rangers have been captured in previous missions, they will probably be kept prisoner at this camp. A successful completion of this mission will restore them to active duty, making them available once again for Ranger Assignment.

**Tactical Tip:** If you're caught in the fire zone of an enemy machine gun nest or bunker, dodge back and forth as you run and the gunners will have a harder time drawing a bead on you.

- **Photograph a Secret Experimental Aircraft:** The enemy have been testing a new experimental aircraft of unknown potential at one of their arctic airfields. Your mission is to infiltrate this airfield, sneak into the hangar and remain long enough to take a series of photos of the aircraft. Stealth is important in the area of the hangar, as any enemies who see you enter it will probably follow and prevent you from achieving your mission. Elsewhere it probably won't be necessary to maintain a low profile. Merit points will be



SILVER STAR



awarded on the basis of number of enemies eliminated, but remember that the goal of this mission is to get pictures of that plane.

**Tactical Tip:** If completely blocked by a barbed wire fence, use a Hand Grenade to blow a hole in it. You can also use Hand Grenades to blow your way through a mine field (though it does tend to attract attention).

- **Free the Hostages:** American and European hostages have been taken by a group of fanatical terrorists and are now in the hands of the country that sponsored them. The hostages are being held in a special prison in the desert, where they are being guarded by enemy soldiers. Your mission is to infiltrate the mission zone and liberate the hostages.

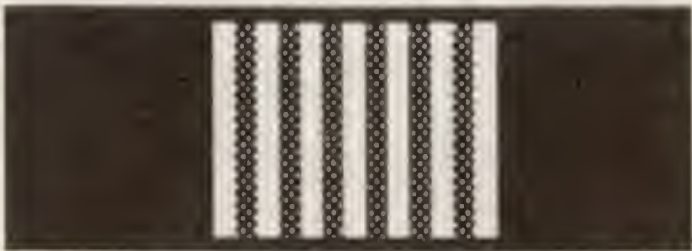


According to intelligence, the hostages are being held in a concrete building with adjacent guard house. You are advised to eliminate the guards, then blow open the prison door with a grenade. Once this is accomplished, recall the plane. Defend the hostages until the Osprey arrives to pick up you and the hostages.

**Caution:** We have reason to believe that the enemy would rather kill the hostages than allow them to be rescued. The enemy may have wired the prison with explosives. Do not alert the enemy unnecessarily! When you make your attack on the prison, beware of attempts by heavily-armed enemies to destroy the hostages before you can liberate them.

**Tactical Tip:** Recall the plane before blowing open the prison door and you will shorten the period in which you have to defend the hostages before help arrives.

- **Create a Diversion:** Our agents are planning to sneak a very important person across a fortified enemy border. It is vital that none of the enemy notice this activity, so it has been decided that a big diversion



SOLDIER'S MEDAL

should be staged to attract the enemy's attention. Your mission is to create that diversion.

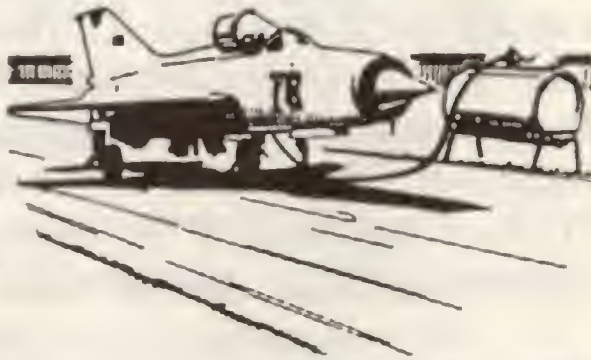
You will be landed on the other side of the border, behind enemy lines. Your mission is to lie low until your Countdown Clock gives you a beep alarm, then start fighting your way toward the border, causing as much damage as possible on the way. Your Pickup Point is within the actual border zone itself; you must make it through the interior defenses to the Pickup Point in order to be retrieved.



Time constraints on this mission are tight. If you start shooting before the alarm sounds, you will suffer severe merit point penalties. On this mission, you cannot recall the Osprey early; you are expected to keep the battle going until the full mission time has run out. The Osprey will appear above the Pickup Point when the clock reaches zero.

**Warning:** The border zone is heavily defended by turret bunkers, barbed wire, mines, and proximity bombs mounted on posts. Stay alert for these dangers, but don't let the diversion slack off.

**Tactical Tip:** Your LAW Rocket has quite a long range. You can fire at targets off the combat screen by lining yourself up on the map. An exploding LAW Rocket also serves as a diversion, attracting the attention of any nearby soldiers. If surrounded by searching troops, a LAW Rocket fired at a distant target may draw them away from you.



- **Delayed Sabotage:** It is necessary that the soldiers at one of the enemy's arctic airfields be distracted by a presumed attack at around midnight tonight, but no forces can be spared at that time to cause the diversion. Therefore your mission is to sneak past the



UNITED NATIONS  
SERVICE MEDAL



airfield's defense perimeter and plant a special time bomb at the aviation fuel dump. This time bomb will explode at midnight, which should make the enemy believe they're under attack. You will be issued time bombs that are all pre-set to explode at midnight, regardless of what fuse time you select.

You must maintain a low profile in the vicinity of the fuel dump. If anyone notices a Ranger, they may become suspicious and find the time bomb before midnight. Try to catch one of the enemy guards in a guardhouse, eliminate him and don his uniform. This should enable you to approach the fuel dump while disguised. Merit points are awarded on the basis of number of enemies eliminated, but won't add up to much if the enemy spots you and the bomb is disabled before it explodes.

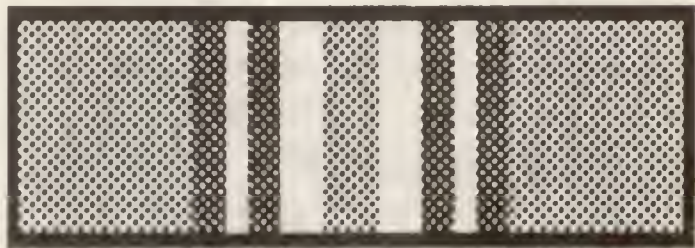
**Tactical Tip:** Wait until no enemy soldiers can be heard moving around the area before moving into the vicinity of the fuel dump.

## After the Mission

When the mission is over, you will see an assessment of your performance, covering whether you met your goal, and whether you were retrieved, captured or killed in action. Merit point score for this mission and new merit point cumulative score are displayed, as are any promotions or awards.

• **Promotions:** If you complete your mission successfully you can expect to be promoted. The ranks a Ranger can achieve in this way are, in order: Private First Class (PFC), Corporal (CPL), Sergeant (SGT), Staff Sergeant (SSG), Platoon Sergeant (PSG), Sergeant Major (SGM), Second Lieutenant (2LT), First Lieutenant (1LT), Captain (CPT), Major (MAJ), Lieutenant Colonel (LTC) and Colonel (COL – achievable only by selecting "Campaign").

• **Commendations and Medals:** Medals are awarded for achievement above and beyond the call of duty. A Ranger can earn: First Army Commendation Medal (COM1), Second Army Commendation Medal (COM2), Bronze Star (BSTR), Silver Star (SSTR), Distinguished Service Cross (DSC) and Congressional Medal of Honor (achievable only by selection "Campaign").

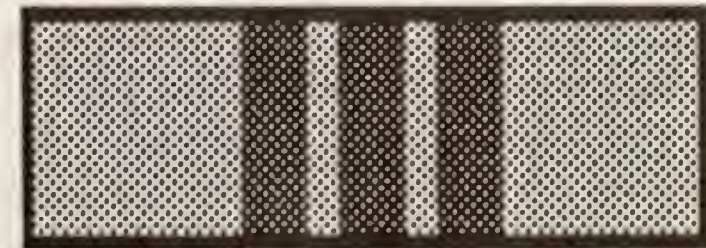


VALOROUS UNIT AWARD

## PART II: AIRBORNE RANGERS

### Standing Orders, Rogers' Rangers, 1759

1. Don't forget nothing.
2. Have your musket clean as a whistle, hatchet scoured, sixty rounds powder and ball, and be ready to march at a minute's warning.
3. When you're on the march, act the way you would if you was sneaking up on a deer. See the enemy first.
4. Tell the truth about what you see and what you do. There is an army depending on us for correct information. You can lie all you please when you tell other folks about the Rangers, but don't ever lie to a Ranger or officer.
5. Don't never take a chance you don't have to.
6. When we're on the march we march single file, far enough apart so one shot can't go through two men.
7. If we strike swamps, or soft ground, we spread out abreast, so it's hard to track us.
8. When we march, we keep moving until dark, so as to give the enemy the least chance at us.
9. When we camp, half the party stays awake while the other half sleeps.
10. If we take prisoners, we keep 'em separate till we have had time to examine them, so they can't cook up a story between 'em.



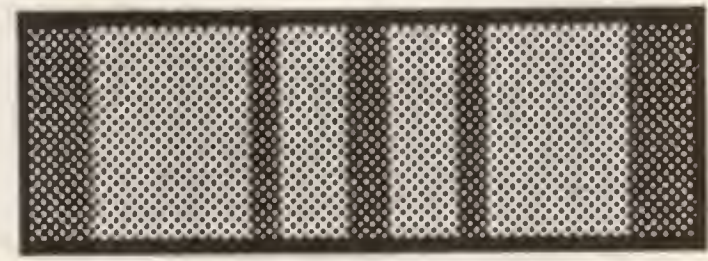
VIETNAM PRES. UNIT CITATION



- 11. Don't ever march home the same way. Take a different route so you won't be ambushed.
- 12. No matter whether we travel in big parties or little ones, each party has to keep a scout twenty yards ahead, twenty yards on each flank and twenty yards in the rear, so the main body can't be surprised and wiped out.
- 13. Every night you'll be told where to meet if surrounded by a superior force.
- 14. Don't sit down to eat without posting sentries.
- 15. Don't sleep beyond dawn. Dawn's when the French and Indians attack.
- 16. Don't cross a river by a regular ford.
- 17. If somebody's trailing you, make a circle, come back onto your own tracks, and ambush the folks that aim to ambush you.
- 18. Don't stand up when the enemy's coming against you. Kneel down, lie down, hide behind a tree.
- 19. Let the enemy come till he's almost close enough to touch. Then let him have it and jump out and finish him up with your hatchet.

**History of the Rangers**

• **Early Days:** The history of the American Rangers is a long and honorable one, beginning a hundred years before there even was a United States of America. The early English colonists quickly discovered that the rules and tactics of European standup warfare were of little use in the backwoods of 17th century North America, where the combatants were loose confederations of Indians and independent-minded settlers. In European wars, armies met by consensus and fought set battles to determine who would be victor; in America, the Indians attacked wherever they would do the most damage and meet the least resistance.



VIETNAM SERVICE MEDAL

Inevitably, the European colonists began to adopt similar tactics.

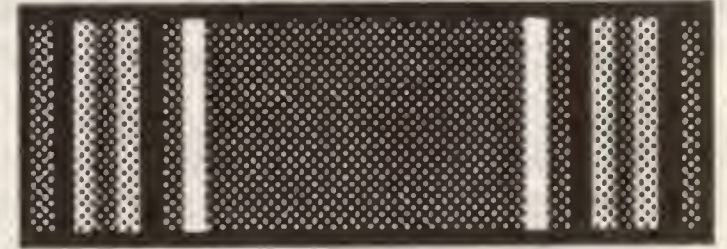
Small "Ranger" units were first formed to scout the territory around the settlements, watch for signs of approaching enemies, and eventually strike back at enemy bases with raids of their own. The key attributes of these reconnaissance and strike teams were stealth, independence, physical toughness and versatility — still the chief characteristics of Rangers today.



The first commander to really articulate the concept of the Rangers and exploit their unique capabilities was Major Robert Rogers, who organized and commanded a large Ranger company during the French and Indian War (1754-1763). Rogers emphasized a rigorous program of training and preparedness, another Ranger hallmark. (Rogers' Standing Orders are reproduced at the beginning of Part II of this manual.) Rogers' Rangers could move fast and strike hard. When

most units were immobilized by winter weather, the Rangers were on the move, attacking the enemy when and where they least expected it.

When the Revolutionary War came, Ranger units were at the forefront, confounding and confusing the British and their allies with their unorthodox tactics. Dan Morgan's "Corps of Rangers," all expert riflemen from Pennsylvania, Maryland and Virginia, played crucial roles at Saratoga and the Battle of the Cowpens, two important American victories. Thomas



WORLD WAR II VICTORY MEDAL



Knowlton's Connecticut Rangers performed dangerous reconnaissance duty in the Northeast. Most famous of all were the Rangers of Colonel Francis Marion, the "Swamp Fox," irregulars who disrupted and disorganized the British efforts in the Carolinas.

The Rangers were disbanded at the end of the war, the usual fate of these elite but specialized units. Maintaining highly-trained elite groups like the Rangers is expensive, and difficult to justify in peacetime. But when war breaks out they suddenly seem essential, and the Rangers rise again. A few years later, in the War of 1812, Congress raised twelve companies of Rangers to serve on the frontiers, protecting the United States on its vulnerable inland side.



- **The War Between the States:** The Confederacy made by far the most effective use of Rangers during the Civil War. Confederate Rangers under Colonel Turner Ashby and Colonel John S. Mosby operated behind Union lines, conducting effective hit-and-run campaigns that tied down many times their number in Union troops. The threat of Mosby's Rangers forced the Union to garrison

soldiers at many locations that would otherwise have gone safely undefended. Mosby showed what a small, fast-moving group of Rangers could accomplish in enemy-held territory.

- **World War II:** Shortly after the United States entered World War II, it became apparent that the Army would once again need small specialized units of tough, elite troops. Six Ranger Battalions were organized, all composed of soldiers who had volunteered for

the Rangers' rigorous training and hazardous missions. The Rangers were employed in every theater of the war, acting as spearhead units, and performing dangerous independent assaults that no other type of unit could handle.

The 1st, 3rd and 4th Ranger Battalions were commanded by Major William O. Darby. Darby's Rangers got their feet wet in the Dieppe commando raid and the North African campaign, and played significant roles in the amphibious invasions of Sicily and Italy. They fought with great distinction against the German Army on the Italian front, often in exposed positions or behind enemy lines.

The 2nd and 5th Ranger Battalions were key players in the Normandy "D-Day" Invasion. The 2nd Battalion had the difficult and incredibly hazardous mission of scaling the sheer cliffs at Pointe du Hoc to destroy the heavy gun emplacements there. Without reinforcements, and despite fierce resistance, the position was taken. The 5th Battalion landed on Omaha Beach with the 1st and 29th Divisions, where the entire assault force was pinned down by an elite German division dug in on the bluffs overhead. The Americans had to break through and get inland, or Omaha Beach could turn into a massacre. It was here that the Commanding General of the 29th Division gave the Rangers their motto, when he turned to the commander of the 5th Ranger Battalion and said, "Rangers, lead the way." Drawing on all their training, resourcefulness, and sheer guts, the Rangers penetrated the German defenses and led the breakout from the beach.

The 6th Ranger Battalion was assigned to the Pacific Theater, where they performed the classic Ranger missions of recon and raiding behind the enemy lines. The 6th Ranger Battalion was the first American unit to return to the Philippines, paving the way for the invasion forces to follow.

Though not specifically designated as a Ranger unit, the 5307th Composite Unit (Provisional), commanded by General Frank D. Merrill and known as "Merrill's Marauders," performed classic Ranger-style operations against the Japanese Army in Burma. Merrill's all-volunteer unit operated behind Japanese lines, disrupting supply, cutting communications, and eventually driving the enemy from the mountains of northern Burma. The 5307th was redesignated the 75th Infantry, the current official unit designation of the Rangers.





- **The Korean War:** As usual, the Rangers were disbanded after World War II, but they were needed again sooner than anyone expected. At the outbreak of the Korean War, Colonel John Gibson Van Houten was appointed to head a new Ranger training program at Fort Benning, Georgia (where Ranger training is held to this day). Eight Ranger companies were to be organized, and for the first time

airborne skills were to be included in their training. The call went out for volunteers, and the response was phenomenal, particularly from the crack 82nd Airborne Division. Many of the volunteers had fought in various elite groups in WWII, including the OSS and earlier Ranger units. Since only a few could be chosen, the new Ranger Infantry Companies (Airborne) were composed of the cream of America's fighting men. At this time, the U.S. Army was still racially segregated. One of the first four Ranger companies was composed entirely of experienced black paratroopers, the only all-black Ranger unit ever formed.

Instead of operating as battalions, these Ranger companies were assigned to Infantry divisions, one company per division. In Korean combat the Rangers were used as firemen, sent from one hot spot to another, stiffening defensive lines, leading attacks, scouting, raiding and counterattacking. They often found themselves in that classic Ranger situation, wreaking havoc behind enemy lines. They conducted raids on the enemy by land, water and air. They performed with great courage, endurance, and wit, but due to being attached to larger units, they received precious little publicity. Everybody knew, however, that in a bad situation they could count on the Rangers.

- **Recent History:** Veterans of the Korean War airborne Rangers were involved in the creation of the Special Forces in the late 1950s. Later, when the United States became heavily involved in the Vietnam War, Ranger companies were once again trained and sent to wherever the fighting was hottest. As in Korea, the fourteen Ranger companies that served in Vietnam were attached to other units. These Ranger companies were primarily utilized for reconnaissance missions, rather than raiding. As America's role in the Vietnam conflict diminished most of these companies were deactivated.



With a global need for quick reaction forces (and finally realizing the waste of experience involved in reconstituting the Rangers every time they were needed), in 1974 the Army formed two permanent Ranger Battalions. The 1st and 2nd Battalions (Ranger), 75th Infantry, were trained at Fort Benning and stationed in Georgia and Washington state. The utility of maintaining standing Ranger battalions was proven during the sudden

invasion of Grenada, in 1983. The 1st and 2nd Ranger Battalions performed a dangerous low-level combat drop on the airfield at Port Salines, securing it in short order. As a result of this graphic example of the effectiveness of the Ranger battalions, a 3rd Battalion and a Headquarters Company were added, bringing the 75th Infantry Rangers up to full regimental strength. Today, the Rangers stand ready to perform, any time, any mission they may be assigned, as soon as they hear the command: "Rangers — lead the way!"



# Ranger Training

U.S. Army Ranger Training is one of the most rigorous military training programs in the world. It stresses physical toughness, combat and leadership skills, resourcefulness and independence. This training is standard for soldiers assigned to the 75th Infantry (Ranger) Regiment. It is also available for qualified officers and noncommissioned officers of the U.S. armed services and allied armed forces. Students wear no insignia or rank during the course; all are addressed merely as "Ranger." Understandably, it is a mark of some status to make it through Ranger school; graduates of the Ranger course can be found in key positions throughout the armed forces. (The troopers assigned to solo missions in **Airborne Ranger** are graduates of the Ranger course who have been assigned to a secret Special Operations Group.)

The purpose of the Ranger course is to provide rigorous training in tactical and leadership skills in a realistic environment. There is little classroom study, as the emphasis is on practical, and strenuous, field work. The course is eight weeks long, and training goes on seven days a week, for an average of 19 hours a day. During the training, Ranger students are often subjected for long periods to mental and physical stress similar to that found in combat. Even while near-exhausted, students must learn how to cope with complicated tactical problems, solve them and move on to the next challenge.

• **Prerequisites:** All applicants to the Ranger course are volunteers. They need not be airborne qualified, but they must be in top physical condition, able to do at least 50 push-ups, 60 sit-ups, and run two miles in under 15 minutes. They must have passed the Combat Water Survival Test, which means they can walk blindfolded off a 3-meter diving board, and swim 15 meters, in full combat gear. They must be qualified in marksmanship, first aid, camouflage, orienteering, and construction of observation posts and defensive positions. They must be confident of their skills and abilities, and ready and eager to improve them.

There are four main phases to the Ranger course: the Benning phase, the mountain phase, the desert phase and the Florida phase. Each emphasizes different skills; each builds on the skills learned in the preceding phases.

## • The Benning Phase:

The initial phase is run at the Ranger Course Headquarters at Fort Benning, Georgia. The first segment of this phase consists of a tough physical training program that includes three- to five-mile runs, hand-to-hand combat, demanding obstacle courses, and skill training in map navigation, first aid and demolitions. The second segment of the Benning phase is more mission-oriented, and includes airborne,

reconnaissance and combat patrol training. The student must take part in five combat-style operations. By the end of the Benning phase, the Ranger student is in a hardened physical condition and has learned the basic skills required in the demanding later phases.

## • The Mountain Phase:

In this phase the Ranger learns to put theory into practice, leading squad and platoon-sized units through ambush and raiding missions in rugged terrain. The Ranger must maintain himself and his equipment in the field





for long periods of little or no supply, performing infiltrations, river crossings, and mountaineering. The mountain-climbing segment culminates in a 200-foot night rappel down a sheer mountain face.



- **The Desert Phase:** At the end of the mountain phase, the Ranger students are picked up by aircraft and flown to the Utah desert. They prepare for a jump on the way, and as they arrive they conduct a parachute assault into the next training area. Here the Ranger student learns desert tactics and survival skills, then undertakes a five-day fast patrol across the desert to a distant destination. In the second segment of the

desert phase the students undertake combat exercises that involve simulated enemies. Each student is required to plan, rehearse and command a platoon-size assault that includes mortar support, air strikes and demolition of targets with explosive charges. This is a live fire raid, i.e. all weapons use live ammunition.



- **The Florida Phase:** This phase begins with a combat parachute jump into the Florida jungle. In the first segment the training focuses on jungle combat skills, use of boats and river navigation, beach landings, helicopter rappelling, air resupply and evacuation, and counterinsurgency techniques. The second segment features combat exercises employing guerilla and counterguerilla

warfare tactics, culminating in a company-sized beach assault followed by an attack on a fortified guerilla camp. This final exercise is no pushover — it simulates a very dangerous mission. The Ranger students must draw on all their training to succeed.



- **Graduation:** Ranger students must receive passing grades on all of these physical and leadership tests. They are rated by their instructors, by the other students, and by themselves — and none of these groups are easily satisfied. But those who make it, the best of the best, go on to the graduation ceremony at Fort Benning, where they receive they right to join the exclusive fraternity of

those who wear the unobtrusive patch that reads: **RANGER** .



## Weapons and Equipment



- **Parafoil:** Not the usual globe-canopy parachute, a parafoil is shaped more like an airplane wing. This shape is difficult to control, but in the hands of an expert it enables the parachutist to glide forward rather than drop straight down. The 'chutist can control the direction of the glide by pulling down on the left or right. This action spills air out one side of the foil, causing it to pivot on the other side and turn in the direction of the pull. Since turning spills air, you fall faster in a turn.

- **Carbine:** The CAR-15 Colt Commando assault rifle. This is basically a handier version of the M-16A1 assault rifle, with a shorter barrel and collapsible buttstock. Designed for close-quarters work, it was issued to Special Forces soldiers in Vietnam. Its small size makes it particularly useful for airborne and air cavalry troops. Loaded, it weighs less than eight pounds. Ammunition: 5.56mm (.223 caliber) cartridge, in 30-round magazines.



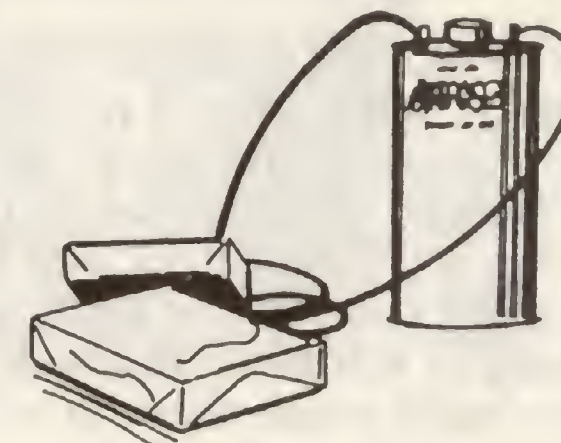
- **Hand Grenade:** M26 Fragmentation Grenade, which looks like a smooth-sided version of the familiar "pineapple" grenade. It consists of an outer casing, a coil of notched wire, a high-explosive filling, and a fuse with a cap on top. A lever is attached to the cap, and a pin safety holds the lever down. When the

pin is pulled and the lever released, the fuse is ignited, and after a short delay the grenade explodes, scattering sharp bits of wire all around.



- **LAW Rocket:** M72A2 Light Antitank Weapon (LAW) consists of a collapsible launch tube with an antitank rocket already loaded. The whole assembly weighs less than six pounds. To fire it, the soldier extends the tube, pops up the sight, disarms the safety, aims, presses the trigger and fires. The rocket launches in a sudden burst of propellant (all of which is used before the rocket clears the tube, in order to protect the soldier from back-blast); as it emerges from the tube, folding fins pop up to stabilize its flight. The warhead detonator explodes on contact, firing a shaped charge forward, penetrating inch-thick steel or concrete several inches thick. The explosion tends to set off ammunition or fuel stored inside the target. The launch tube is disposable.

- **Time Bomb:** A shaped charge of plastic explosive with an attached timer-detonator. The time to detonation is selected; when the detonator counts down to zero, it sends an electric charge into the plastic explosive, detonating it. The shaping forces most of the explosion against the object it is attached to.



- **Knife:** M7 Knife, which doubles as a bayonet for the Colt Commando.



## Designers' Notes

One day in early 1987 "Wild Bill" Stealey, President of MicroProse, came into a Product Development meeting and said, "Let's do a fast-action easy-to-learn combat game called Airborne Ranger in which one soldier is pitted against lots of enemies!"

"An arcade video game!" we screeched, "Bleahh!"

"No, not an arcade game, but a, uh, combat action simulation! Yes, that's it!" he said, pounding the table. (That always gets our attention.) In short order he had convinced us we could do it — we could create an intelligent, fun, suspenseful arcade-style — uh, I mean fast-action — game that would appeal to fans of our usual intense simulations and to devotees of you-know-what-type games. Gamers everywhere were waiting for this! It was our duty to them to start immediately!

So we did. We formed a design team consisting of Lawrence Schick (game design, project management), Scott Spanburg (software development) and Iris Idokogi (software graphics) — all designers of Serious Simulations, but also veterans of other companies where we'd worked on, you know, action games. We got down to it, hashing out how the game was going to work, what effects we were trying to achieve, what features we should include and what order we should create them in — the usual process of organizing a game design. As it started to come together we realized that Bill was right — this was going to be a fun game. And somewhat to our surprise, the more we worked on it, the better we liked it.

See, there are problems with most computer action games in that they are descended from coin-operated arcade games, and arcade games have different economic objectives from home computer games. An arcade game wants quarters, and it wants them often. That means an arcade game has to be an intense experience of relentless action... that kills you after 2.5 minutes. There's precious little time for thinking in the sudden-death world of the arcade game. To succeed you must learn to react by reflex, twitching and jerking the controller around like a crazed weasel until you're exhausted. Well, that's exciting, but it's not enough for us. We wanted a more complex experience with a greater dynamic range: we wanted to be able to plan a reasonable strategy, make intelligent tactical decisions based on the situation, and then have to fight like crazed weasels when the enemy closed in. We think we've achieved this goal.

Not-so-incidentally, we also wanted to reproduce at least some of the thrills and challenges facing a U.S. Army Ranger in a desperate situation. We think we've achieved that as well. However, our game differs from most real combat situations in two important ways. First, a commando raid is not a typical wartime experience. Elite specialists like Rangers are selected as much for independence as for toughness and combat skill; they are expected to be able to go it alone when necessary and do the job with little or no support. But real wars aren't won by commando raids, they're won by legions of disciplined troops who support each other at every move. Even the Rangers usually work in close contact with other units. The lone warrior makes a great game subject, but that's not the way it usually happens.

The second big difference is that in games no one really gets killed. Or hurt, or maimed, or mentally shattered. We could simulate all of that if we wanted to, in detail — make this like a real combat experience, yes sirree. But we wouldn't like that game one little bit, and neither would you (we hope). We're not in this business to shock, horrify, or batter the sensibilities of our customers — we're here to entertain you. Deadly combat, dreadful though it may be, is also exciting and fascinating, and those are the aspects we choose to emphasize. After all, it's only a game — and anybody who tells you otherwise is insulting your intelligence by implying you can't tell the difference.

A few final notes: Scott wants you to be sure to note the way the various soldiers move around each other without getting confused about who-overlaps-who. Iris wants you to take the time to admire the soldiers themselves. Due to computer memory limitations, we only gave her a few animation frames to work with, but she did wonders with them. Lawrence wants you to know that he's responsible for the opinions expressed in the preceding paragraphs, so if you disagree, you can blame him. We all hope you'll get many evenings of fun out of Airborne Ranger. Drop us a line and let us know what you think of it.

**THE AIRBORNE RANGER DESIGN TEAM**  
August, 1987



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